

DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

news release

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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WILDERNESS HEARINGS FOR WILDLIFE REFUGE ISLANDS SCHEDULED IN ALASKA AND NEVADA

Hearings for discussing proposals to include islands of two national wildlife refuges in the National Wilderness Preservation System will be held in February in Alaska and Nevada, the Interior Department's Fish and Wildlife Service announced today.

The refuges involved, and the hearing dates and times, are listed below:

- I. Semidi National Wildlife Refuge, hearing Feb. 20, 7 p.m., Loussac Library, Anchorage, Alaska.

The refuge consists of nine islands in the Gulf of Alaska approximately 50 miles off the Alaskan peninsula containing 8,422 acres and surrounding submerged lands. Many birds, including bald eagles and peregrine falcons, use the rocky shorelines for nesting.

The islands contain many oceanic birds, including one of the largest Pacific fulmur colonies in Alaska waters. Other predominant sea bird species are murre, kittiwakes, and puffins. Ground squirrels are the only known land mammals present, but surrounding waters attract sea lions, hair seals, sea otter and whales. Commercial halibut and king crab fishing occurs in the area.

The islands rarely are visited by man, although Russian fishermen use them as loading and unloading zones, by international agreement.

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A brochure describing the proposal is available from the Area Director, Fish and Wildlife Service, 813 D Street, Anchorage, Alaska 99501, or the Refuge Manager, Aleutian Islands National Wildlife Refuge, Cold Bay, Alaska 99571.

Oral or written statements may be presented at the public hearing or submitted in writing to the area director by March 22, when the hearing record will be closed.

II. Anaho Island National Wildlife Refuge, hearing Feb. 10, 9 a.m., Washoe County Library, Reno, Nevada.

Anaho Island, its 750 acres rising 600 feet above Pyramid Lake, 30 miles northeast of Reno, supports the largest nesting colony of white pelicans in North America.

A map and other information about the proposal are available from the Refuge Manager, Anaho Island National Wildlife Refuge, P.O. Box 592, Fallon, Nevada 89406, or the Regional Director, Fish and Wildlife Service, P.O. Box 3737, Portland, Oregon 97208.

Oral or written statements may be submitted at the hearing or written comments can be sent to the regional director by March 12, when the hearing record will be closed.

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